



## Programs and Services

### Family Support Centre

- ❖ Opened in 1995, the Family Support Centre serves as the operating centre for all North Shore Schizophrenia Society programs.
- ❖ Provides a haven for family members coping with an ill relative.
- ❖ Includes a meeting space, a private space for one-on-one counselling, and administrative offices.
- ❖ Has a wide range of printed information, documents, videos and books on serious mental illness and on available services and programs.

### Family Peer Counselling

- ❖ One-on-one counselling of family members dealing with the illness, often in crisis situations.
- ❖ Provides advice and support in procuring treatment for an ill relative, including involuntary committal where appropriate.
- ❖ Welcomes family members as equals.
- ❖ Provides the insight and understanding of those who have gone through it themselves.

### Family Support Group

- ❖ An open sharing of experiences, lessons learned, practical tips and insights.
- ❖ Provides the ongoing support of a group.
- ❖ Allows catharsis for those struggling with difficult situations.
- ❖ Facilitated by peers, which encourages openness and frankness.

### Family-to-Family Education Course

- ❖ A 12-part structured education course going into all aspects of severe mental illness.
- ❖ Taught by trained peer instructors.
- ❖ Covers the biological, scientific and pharmaceutical aspects of serious mental illness as well as symptomology, diagnosis, crisis management, and advocacy.
- ❖ Provides family members with the knowledge base to interact more productively with professionals and to help generate better outcomes.
- ❖ Raises levels of confidence and know-how.

### Public Lecture Series

- ❖ Held at Lions Gate Hospital four times a year.
- ❖ Covers services for the mentally ill, the latest in research, new medications, innovations in diagnosis and treatment, what families need to know and want to know, and much more.
- ❖ Started in 1984, this is the longest continuous lecture series in Canada on serious mental illness.

## **Partnership Program**

- ✧ First-person presentations by a patient and a family member to North Shore high schools and Capilano University.
- ✧ Relates in an immediate and moving way what it's like to fall ill and what it's like to have a member of your family fall ill.
- ✧ Breaks down barriers and fear, encouraging those who may see someone falling ill to act quickly to get help for that person.

## ***The Notepad***

- ✧ A regular newsletter for members on events, developments and issues.
- ✧ Distributed to other organizations dealing with mental illness in B.C., many other non-profits, selected professionals, and interested members of the public.
- ✧ Provides a forum for commentary on crucial issues touching on the treatment and recovery of the seriously mentally ill.

## **www.northshoreschizophrenia.org**

- ✧ A specially designed website giving people quick and easy access to information on serious mental illness and on the Family Support Centre's programs and services.

## ***Walk the World For Schizophrenia***

- ✧ Annual walk for members, patients, friends and family along the West Vancouver Sea Walk.
- ✧ Helps raise public awareness about serious mental illness, and NSSS programs and services.

## **Awareness**

- ✧ Participation in the West Vancouver Community Day Parade and the North Shore Canada Day Parade; leaflets in doctors' offices, libraries, community centres and elsewhere; Family Support Centre tours; presentations to service clubs, members of the community and employee groups; exhibits at special events such as the North Shore Festival of Volunteers, and other outreach.

## **Social events**

- ✧ The annual North Shore Schizophrenia Society Christmas banquet, bringing together the mentally ill, their families and friends....and Santa Claus.
- ✧ Restaurant outings and picnics for the mentally ill and their families.

## **Legal issues**

- ✧ Information and support for family members whose ill relatives are caught up in the justice system.
- ✧ Active monitoring of trials and inquests involving the mentally ill in British Columbia.
- ✧ Ensuring where possible that both defence counsel and crown prosecutors are familiar with, and understand, serious mental illness where it's an issue in trials.

## **Advocacy**

- ✧ Promoting best practices, in particular the sharing of information with families and the inclusion of family members as part of the treatment team.
- ✧ Advocating for early intervention and a pro-active approach to treatment, to reduce the ravages of the illness and produce better outcomes.
- ✧ Promoting proper usage of the pro-treatment provisions of the B.C. Mental Health Act.
- ✧ Promoting adequate treatment and services for the mentally ill, including housing.